

Message Text

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SUBJ: IMPLICATIONS OF SELF-GOVERNMENT IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA
FOR U.S. ROLE ON TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL

1. UN FOURTH (DECOLONIZATION) COMMITTEE SPENT TWO DAYS EARLY THIS MONTH COMMEMORATING, WITH APPROPRIATELY LENGTHY SPEECH-MAKING, FORMAL ACCESSION OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA TO INTERNAL SELF-GOVERNMENT. SEVERAL SPEAKERS NOTED THAT FULL PNG INDEPENDENCE WAS JUST AROUND THE CORNER AND THAT THIS WOULD LEAVE ONLY ONE TERRITORY -- U.S. TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC -- ON THE TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL'S ROLLS. (INDEPENDENCE FOR PNG EXPECTED NO LATER THAN SPRING 1975). AT JUNE 1973 SESSION OF TC, AUSTRALIANS ACCEPTED WITH ALACRITY INFORMAL CONSENSUS OF OTHER MEMBERS THAT THOSE ASPECTS OF ADMINISTRATION FULLY IN HANDS OF PAPUA NEW GUINEANS NOT OF CONCERN TO COUNCIL. AUSTRALIAN DEPUTY PERMREP TOLD US RECENTLY THAT WITH PNG SELF-GOVERNMENT, AUSTRALIANS AND PAPUA NEW GUINEANS WILL GREATLY SCALE DOWN THEIR PRESENTATION TO TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL (TC) BEGINNING WITH JUNE 1974 SESSION.

2. IMPLICATIONS FOR USG SEEM VERY CLEAR FROM HERE. AT THE FOUR-WEEK SESSION NEXT JUNE, TC FOR FIRST TIME
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WILL FOCUS ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY ON TTPI. IN PAST, WE HAVE BEEN

FORTUNATE IN THAT TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL DELIBERATIONS ON TTPI HAVE BEEN ALMOST COMPLETELY IGNORED BY OTHER UN BODIES SUCH AS COMMITTEE OF 24 AND UNGA FOURTH COMMITTEE. UP TO NOW, EVEN RADICAL ANTI-COLONIALISTS (PREOCCUPIED WITH AFRICAN DECOLNIZATION PROBLEMS AND UNWILLING TO ANTAGONIZE US UNDULY) GENERALLY RELUCTANT TO CHALLENGE SERIOUSLY US VIEW THAT SINCE TTPI IS "STRATEGIC TRUST," ONLY SECURITY COUNCIL HAS AUTHORITY TO REVIEW TC'S CONSIDERATION OF IT.

3. THIS YEAR, HOWEVER, UN CIRCLES HAVE DISPLAYED MUCH MORE INTEREST IN TTPI THAN THEY HAVE IN PAST, PARTIALLY AS A RESULT GREATER MEDIA COVERAGE (PARTICULARLY NEW YORK TIMES AND WASHINGTON POST) AND PARTIALLY BECAUSE OF LOBBYING AND INTERVIEWING BY PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS (AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE, AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION, CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT, ETC.). GIVEN TENDENCY OF RADICAL NON-ALIGNED, FOLLOWING ALGIERS CONFERENCE AND MIDDLE EAST WAR, TO TWIST U.S. TAIL WITH RENEWED ENTHUSIASM, WE FEAR THAT LONG AND ACrimonious TC HEARINGS ON TTPI NEXT JUNE CAN AND WILL WAKE UP NON-ALIGNED TO POTENTIALS OF MICRONESIA ISSUE. SETTLEMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS ISSUE, EASING OF FOREIGN INVESTMENT RESTRICTIONS, MICRONESIAN ENTRY INTO ECAFE, MOVEMENT TOWARDS ADB MEMBERSHIP AND AGREEMENT WITH UNDP WILL BE USEFUL IN PRESENTING US CASE. ADDITIONAL MOVES TOWARDS GREATER INTERNAL SELF-GOVERNMENT FOR TTPI WOULD ENABLE US TO FOLLOW AUSTRALIAN EXAMPLE IN REPORTING TO COUNCIL ONLY ON AREAS WHERE USG RETAINS ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL.

4. ISSUE OF POLITICAL STATUS, HOWEVER, WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE CENTER OF ATTENTION AND MAIN POINT OF FRICTION AT NEXT TC SESSION. WE WILL BE PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE IF MICRONESIAN POLITICIANS APPEAR BEFORE COUNCIL TO COMPLAIN VIGOROUSLY (EVEN IF ERRONEOUSLY) THAT US DISPLAYING BAD FAITH IN STATUS NEGOTIATIONS, DENYING INDEPENDENCE OPTION OR ATTEMPTING TO DISMEMBER TERRITORY. WE THEREFORE BELIEVE IT ESSENTIAL TO AVOID TUMULTUOUS TC SESSION WHICH COULD HARDEN NEGOTIATING POSITIONS AND ADVERSELY AFFECT UN ATTITUDES ON PUERTO RICO AND US NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES.

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WE RECOGNIZE DIFFICULTIES CREATED FOR OUR STATUS NEGOTIATIONS BY EXHORBITANT MICRONESIAN FINANCIAL DEMANDS. WE NEVERTHELESS CONSIDER IT TO BE STRONGLY IN US INTEREST THAT PROGRESS IN STATUS NEGOTIATIONS BEFORE NEXT TC MEETING IN JUNE BE SUFFICIENT TO DISSUADE MICRONESIANS FROM CHARGING THAT US RESPONSIBLE FOR DELAYING MICRONESIA'S ATTAINMENT OF SELF-GOVERNMENT.

5. FROM OUR VANTAGE POINT HERE, NEGATIVE FACTORS ARE LIKELY ONLY TO GROW AS TIME GOES ON. IT SEEMS CLARLY IN THE INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES TO DO WHATEVER CAN BE DONE WITHIN REASON TO SPEED UP THE TERMINATION OF THE TRUSTEESHIP. TIME WILL BE WORKING NOT ON THE SIDE OF THE UNITED STATES, BUT ON THE SIDE OF THE MICRONESIANS -- AND OF THOSE WHO WISH TO PUT THE UNITED STATES ON THE DEFENSIVE IN THE BROADER WORLD CONTEXT OF DECOLONIZATION ISSUES.

6. THERE IS SAD IRONY IN THE FACT THAT THE COLONIAL POWERS HAVE SUCCESSFULLY TERMINATED THEIR U.N. TRUSTEESHIP RESPONSIBILITIES WHILE THE UNITED STATES, THE TRADITIONAL ADVOCATE OF SELF-DETERMINATION AND THE CHAMPION OF THE TRUSTEESHIP SYSTEM, WILL SOON BECOME THE LAST ADMINISTERING POWER OF A TRUST TERRITORY.
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